



# Meeting Notes

## Tree & Resources Focus Group Meeting

**4:00 p.m. – Monday, June 29, 2009**

Council Conference Room, 211 West Aspen Ave, Flagstaff, AZ

1. Welcome and Introductions

In attendance:

**Mark Shiery**, City of Flagstaff (Fire)

Tish Bogan-Ozman, Real Estate

Marilyn Weissman, Friends of Flagstaff Future

Karen Goodwin, Citizen

Joe Loverich, Citizen

Kim Tittelbaugh, Citizen

Mark Brehl, Citizen

Mark Spinti, Citizen

Steve Nelson, Citizen (Chair)

**Roger Eastman**, City of Flagstaff

Kent Hotsenpiller, Engineer

**Ed Larsen**, City of Flagstaff

Steve Gatewood, Wildwood Consulting, Citizen (Vice-chair)

Collis Lovely, Citizen

**Elaine Averitt**, City of Flagstaff

Christine Laguna, Citizen

Paul Jones, Citizen

Tom Bean, Citizen

Georgia Duncan, Citizen

**Ellen Ryan**, City of Flagstaff (Water Conservation)

2. Focus Group Overview

Steve Nelson, Chair, opened the meeting and discussed a grouping of many of the key "future discussion" items into eleven groupings. He indicated that since we were supposed to get the focus group wrapped up by the end of July (two more meetings), that he hoped we could tackle five or six of the issues and move them with recommendations to the resolved column for the consultant.

### 3. Roles/expectations of the Focus Groups

Roger Eastman did a quick explanation of the new approach to help the Focus Groups complete their task on time and assured the group that they would get through all of the issues and pass them on to the consultant. Steve Nelson (Chair) then moved to the second page and recommended that they work on the easier issues and save the first four more complex issues for the last two meetings. The group agreed.

### 4. General comments:

- Item #8 - Dark Skies and moved it to the Outdoor Lighting focus group. It was determined that they wanted that group to know it was considered a resource.
- Item #10 - View Sheds. There was a considerable amount of discussion:
  - ✓ Building heights need to be limited to protect view sheds; some of this may spill over into the Neighborhood Focus Group meeting discussions. Ask the consultant to find appropriate tools to support view sheds as a resource.
  - ✓ View sheds should be viewed as a "resource"
  - ✓ New development is already required to place utilities underground (both APS and Engineering Standards) and doesn't need to be covered in the Zoning Code amendments
  - ✓ Design Guidelines – offer incentives/flexible measures for view preservation.
  - ✓ No billboards, solar collectors or wind turbines that could impact view sheds
  - ✓ View shed corridors are defined already in the Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan
  - ✓ Concern to ensure private property rights are not violated by imposition of view sheds
  - ✓ Issue of view sheds must be addressed in the new Zoning code.
  - ✓ .
- Item #11 - GIS software: It was generally agreed that this was a developer's tool to facilitate easier calculation of resources using GIS. Other thoughts:
  - ✓ It could include a link to Google Earth (but accuracy is an issue)
  - ✓ USFS has soils and slope data that may be useful
  - ✓ Encourage the use of existing available tools in the interim until the final product is developed
  - ✓ Use county data as it is accurate and accessible
  - ✓ Develop a standard system/program for calculating resources and reporting on the calculations to be used by all applicants and their consultants. Would make it easier for staff and applicants. Recommended that this be forwarded on by the Process and Procedures Focus Group.

- Item #9 - Wildfire issues: Needs to be coordinated with Resource calculations. This also got into a lengthy debate between how it is done and what the developer does next.
  - ✓ Fire Dept looks at a site as though it is undeveloped and does not thin and do fire wise clearing/thinning based on a concept site plan. It is a forest stewardship plan.
  - ✓ FFD and CD Staff do a group review in advance of clearing
  - ✓ FFD intent is to return forest to natural historical conditions for two reasons:
    - forest health is very important – thinning minimizes the destruction by bark beetles
    - Fire protection – wildfire management by forest thinning – focuses on horizontal separation and reduction of ladder fuels. Desire to achieve “clumpy groupiness” as the means to minimize fire danger and satisfy other concerns (Aesthetic, more natural, wildlife, etc).
  - ✓ FFD leans on the high side with thinning, i.e., to keep more trees knowing that more trees will be lost through development.
  - ✓ Karen made a point of tree canopies will only grow slowly after thinning and trees will grow steadily (many are 90 plus years old)
  - ✓ Agreement that trees are a critical resource that define Flagstaff’s character; balance this value with a concern for fire safety from wildfire.
  
- Item #7 - WUI codes (International Wildland Urban Interface Code): FFDE defines defensible space as management of the entire property, not just a specified distance requirement from a structure.
  - ✓ Cross reference this topic to the zoning code. WUI comes first as a part of a stewardship plan for an area.
  - ✓ Ensure there is no conflict between the zoning code and the WUI Code (Process and Procedures Group)
  
- Item #5 - What to do when resources are destroyed in the event of a catastrophic fire event?
 

Two major topics:

  - ✓ Naturally caused fire - landscape code should address the need for revegetation and planting of trees. When reinstating resources destroyed, also be sure to tie in resolution of erosion issues and impacts off-site.
    - Reseeding is beneficial, but planting of native trees is very difficult because of our soils. It is important to “fall” burned trees parallel to the slope and reseed behind them.
    - List resources for mitigation in zoning code, such as NAU, U of A Agricultural Extension Office, USFS, State Land Dept, etc. as these agencies can all offer assistance

- Possibly use the USFS model for rehabilitation on private land and put the burden on the land owner
  - FFD will work with property owners to facilitate seeding and mitigation
- [Find a way to code the above items into the new zoning code]
- ✓ If trees are intentionally removed, then tools for mitigation and compensation/enforcement are needed to resolve the destruction.
- Item #6 - Solar and Wind energy systems – impact on resources:
  - ✓ Impact of protected tree resources on the efficiency and operation of wind energy systems and solar systems
  - ✓ State statutes that infer that Cities cannot enact Zoning codes to restrict solar installations
  - ✓ Need to balance conflicting values for Green solutions with need to protect trees, preserve view sheds.
  - ✓ Establish a hierarchy – what is most important, based upon Federal, State and local mandates to ensure that there are no conflicts. This is also a values discussion – what does the community value and what are more important than others?
  - ✓ Wind energy needs to be dovetailed with view sheds.

NOTE: This moved all items discussed on June 29<sup>th</sup> to the resolved column and the future meetings will then work on the first four major issues.

5. Future meetings:  
Next meeting will be July 6, 2009 @ 4:00 pm, Council Conference room.
6. Adjournment  
5:35 p.m.